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Transfer is not a dirty word

Ben Shapiro | Aug 27, 2003

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Raise your hand if you were shocked at the breakdown of the so-called Middle East "road map." If you are raising your hand, give yourself a nice, hard slap across the chops. Maybe that will wake you up from your reverie of self-delusion.

The "road map" was doomed from the start. The Arab enmity for Jews and the state of Israel allows for no peace process.

The time for half measures has passed. Bulldozing houses of homicide bombers is useless. Instituting ongoing curfews in Arab-populated cities is useless. Roadblocks, touch fences, midnight negotiations and cease-fires are useless.

Some have rightly suggested that Israel be allowed to decapitate the terrorist leadership of the Palestinian Authority. But this too is only a half measure. The ideology of the Palestinian population is indistinguishable from that of the terrorist leadership.

Half measures merely postpone our realization that the Arabs dream of Israel's destruction. Without drastic measures, the Arab dream will come true. In the short term, the establishment of a "Palestinian state" based in Judea, Samaria and Gaza cuts Israel to the bone. In some places, Israel would be an unthinkable 9 miles wide. In the long term, the growth of the hostile Israeli-Arab population within pre-1967 Israel bodes ill for the future of the Jewish state. As University of Haifa professor Arnon Soffer says, "The trends and indicators all point to an economic and ecological catastrophe waiting to happen and of the death knell of the ideological dream of a Jewish state."

Here is the bottom line: If you believe that the Jewish state has a right to exist, then you must allow Israel to transfer the Palestinians and the Israeli-Arabs from Judea, Samaria, Gaza and Israel proper. It's an ugly solution, but it is the only solution. And it is far less ugly than the prospect of bloody conflict ad infinitum. When two populations are constantly enmeshed in conflict, it is insane to suggest that somehow deep-seated ideological change will miraculously occur, allowing the two sides to live together.

Unfortunately, this insanity is generally accepted as "the only way forward." President Bush accepts it because it is politically palatable. The Arabs accept it because for them, it is a Trojan horse. The Israelis accept it because they are afraid that if they expel the Arabs, they will be called Nazis.

For anyone who lived through the Holocaust, or who has relatives who died in it, being called a Nazi is unspeakably terrible. That is the secret weapon of the Arabs. Any time the Jews get wise and threaten mass expulsion of Arabs, the Arabs pull out their big stick, equating Nazism with Zionism. Their cartoons merge swastikas with stars of David. Their newspapers call Ariel Sharon another Adolf Hitler. Their spokespeople cry "Genocide!" And the Jews cower in fear that they could be equated with their parents' murderers.

The Jews don't realize that expelling a hostile population is a commonly used and generally effective way of preventing violent entanglements. There are no gas chambers here. It's not genocide; it's transfer. It's not Hitler; it's Churchill.

After World War II, Poland was recreated by the Allied Powers. In doing so, the Allies sliced off a chunk of Germany and extended Poland west to the Oder-Neisse line. Anywhere from 3.5 million to 9 million Germans were forcibly expelled from the new Polish territory and relocated in Germany.

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill was pleased with the result. In 1944, he had explained to the House of Commons that "expulsion is the method which, so far as we have been able to see, will be the most satisfactory and lasting. There will be no mixture of populations to cause endless trouble ... a clean sweep will be made. I am not alarmed by the prospect of the disentanglement of populations, nor even by these large transferences, which are more possible in modern conditions than they ever were before." Churchill was right. The Germans accepted the new border, and decades of conflict between Poles and Germans ended.

Arab-Jewish conflict is exponentially more volatile than German-Polish conflict ever was. And the solution is far easier. If there was "room in Germany for the German populations of East Prussia and of the other territories," as Churchill stated, there is certainly room in the spacious Muslim states of the Middle East for 5 million Palestinians and Israeli Arabs. If Germans, who had a centuries-old connection to the newly created Polish territory, could be expelled, then surely Palestinians, whose claim to Judea, Samaria and Gaza is dubious at best, can be expelled.

It's time to stop being squeamish. Jews are not Nazis. Transfer is not genocide. And anything else isn't a solution.

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